



2010 HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIR
LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS



The City of Bloomington will host its ninth Home Improvement Fair, **Saturday, February 20, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**, at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

If you’re considering making home improvements, you won’t want to miss this free event. Fairgoers will be able to visit a variety of home improvement exhibits, have questions answered by professionals in the home improvement field and get ideas for remodeling projects.

The Home Improvement Fair is a great opportunity for the whole family to have fun. There will be plenty of activities and entertainment for kids, including booths where children can create their own projects.

In 2009, more than 1,800 people visited the Home Improvement Fair; 2010 is expected to attract even more.

For more information, call Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority Program Manager Bryan Hartman at 952-563-8943.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HOME FAIR.

BLOOMINGTON
TOP 10

Top 10 will be a regular Briefing feature, reporting on some of the ways Bloomington and our region excel.

#7 GREEN CITY

The SustainLane website and Business Facilities magazine both rated our metro area #7 in their green city rankings. We did particularly well in the subcategories for local food and agriculture (#1), knowledge base and communications (#4), city innovation (#6), and green economy (#7). To catch up with #1 ranked Portland, Oregon, we need to do better in housing affordability (#32), transit ridership (#25), green building (#25), and street congestion (#25).

Business Facilities commented that “the coveted green stamp reflects the growing importance of environmental considerations in site selection.”

Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...

EARTH ACTION HEROES
COOKING UP A GREEN KITCHEN

When Larry Lee and his wife Betsy decided it was time to update their 1960s kitchen they knew they wanted the updates to be sustainable, yet their first priority was to find a building/design company that had a reputation for quality and flexibility. It just so happened that a small building and design firm dedicated to sustainable building, Otogawa-Anschel, met the Lees’ criteria and then some.

“The fact that their philosophy is ‘green’ was a plus,” Lee said. “We were looking for a company that would allow us to do some work ourselves. Another reason we chose them was because of the awards they had received for small kitchen design.”

So begins the story of how a small, inefficient kitchen was transformed into a bright and energy-efficient space.

After the new design was prepared and approved, the Lees agreed to do the demolition, install tiles, purchase appliances and fixtures and paint to keep project costs down. In addition, the designer retained existing materials where possible, such as the existing ceramic floor tile and some of the built-in cabinets.

The project’s first stages involved recycling the demolition materials and old appliances. The company prides itself on recycling almost all debris generated

from projects – from wood and gypsum board to the cast iron kitchen sink – and using only recycled and engineered lumber.

According to designer Greg Kraus, “Some of the design challenges we faced were inefficient cabinets and appliance layout, cramped work spaces and cabinets and countertops that were showing their age. Moving the appliance locations resulted in 40 percent more counter space and created more storage.”

Focusing on recycling and local materials, the builders used cabinets made by a company in Eden Prairie. Wood shelves reclaimed from an old barn came from Manomen Resawn Timbers in Hugo. In addition, they installed attractive and durable Minnesota-made Cambria quartz countertops.

Removing parts of an interior wall allowed for more natural light to flow into the kitchen. Using advanced framing techniques means less lumber is consumed and the small additional cost for better insulation and Energy Star-rated appliances will be recouped by reduced utility bills.

The designers suggested replacing the Lees’ fluorescent tube lighting



with energy-efficient task lighting throughout the space.

“Greg asks a lot of questions about how you use the space,” Lee said. “He encourages selecting energy-efficient lighting and appliances, which we did.”

For tips on how you can make your home more sustainable, be sure to attend the Home Improvement Fair, see article left, or visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUSTAINABILITY.



THINK GREEN
Consider donating or selling usable items. Look for Citywide Garage Sale information in the April Briefing.

THINK SPRING!

2010 CURBSIDE CLEANUP
GET YOUR HOME INTO SHAPE

The Spring Curbside Cleanup is right around the corner. **Be sure you’re prepared by setting your materials at the curb before 7 a.m. on your pickup day.** As in previous years, trucks will go through each neighborhood only once.

Do not set out appliances, such as refrigerators and air conditioners, until the morning of your collection day. People cut lines in these appliances

to salvage the copper. Freon or Chlorofluorocarbons are released into the air and accelerate ozone depletion.

Seniors and disabled residents should contact their Neighborhood Watch block captains or call Human Services, 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740, for assistance. Requests for assistance must be made at least one week in advance.



SCHEDULE, FROM EAST TO WEST	
East of Portland	Saturday, April 10
Portland to Penn	Saturday, April 17
Penn to France	Saturday, April 24
France to Normandale	Saturday, May 1
West of Normandale	Saturday, May 8

GREENER GARDENING
LEARN ABOUT RAIN GARDENS



The City of Bloomington and Lower Minnesota River Watershed District are hosting two rain garden workshops for Bloomington residents, **Thursday, May 6 and May 20, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**, in the Bloomington Public Works building, 1700 West 98th Street. Attend and you could win a raffle for a free rain barrel. The workshops are facilitated by Metro Blooms, a nonprofit gardening organization, and local landscape ecologist Rusty Schmidt. Hennepin County Master Gardeners will also be available to answer your gardening questions.

To register, visit www.metroblooms.org or call 651-699-2426.